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TO AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 045230

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/04/2034

TAGS: [ETTC](#) [IR](#) [IT](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: SHIPMENT OF IRANIAN-ORIGIN TACTICAL VEHICLES
DETAINED IN ITALY

Classified By: ISN Acting PDAS Tony Foley,
Reasons 1.4 (b), (c), and (d)

SUMMARY

1. (S//REL Italy) Italian authorities detained a shipment of Iranian-origin tactical vehicles destined for Syria in June 2006. We have obtained information suggesting that the shippers of this cargo believe Italian authorities intend to release the shipment, allowing them to complete the delivery to Syria. The vehicles in question are possibly related to a ground-based electronic warfare system. The final transfer to Syria of vehicles that have been designed or modified to carry electronic warfare equipment would constitute a violation of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1747, which prohibits Iran from exporting arms or related materiel. This prohibition applies even though the initial shipment pre-dates UNSCR 1747.

ACTION REQUEST

2. (S//REL Italy) Post is requested to engage appropriate-level Italian officials to:

- Confirm the identity of the cargo seized by Italy.
- Ascertain whether Italian officials intend to release the cargo, either for onward transfer to Syria or for return to Iran.
- Encourage the government of Italy to continue detaining this cargo.
- Inform the GOI that the USG is willing to work with them to determine appropriate disposition of the cargo.

Post may draw from the summary above, as well as the objectives and talking points below, as appropriate.

OBJECTIVES

3. (S//REL Italy) Post should pursue the following:

- Clarify GOI intent regarding the cargo in question and encourage the GOI to continue detaining the cargo.
- Emphasize that this shipment could constitute a violation of the arms transfer prohibitions codified in paragraph 5 of UNSCR 1747.
- Explain that the prohibition in UNSCR 1747 applies even though the original transfer pre-dates the resolution. The resolution does not contain a "grandfather" clause, and the Iran Sanctions Committee has confirmed that such transfers constitute violations of the Resolution (Hand over Iran Sanctions Committee Note Verbale sent septel).
- Highlight that now is not the time for business as usual with Iran.
- Express USG willingness to work with the GOI to determine appropriate disposition of the cargo.

TALKING POINTS/NON-PAPER

14. (S//REL Italy) Begin talking points/non-paper:

-- We would like to raise with you the status of a shipment of Iranian-origin tactical vehicles destined for Syria that we understand was detained in Italy in June 2006.

-- We understand that this cargo was originally shipped in three 40-foot containers aboard the Senator Lines vessel M/V LONDON SENATOR from Bandar Abbas, Iran for discharge at Gioia Tauro, Italy. The cargo was then to have been trans-shipped to Latakia, Syria. The cargo was seized at Gioia Tauro in June 2006.

-- We appreciate the steps Italian authorities took to prevent this shipment.

-- According to our information, representatives of the shipping firm involved in this transfer possibly have obtained information indicating that this shipment has been or will soon be released, and are preparing to complete the delivery to Latakia.

-- Our information indicates that these vehicles may be related to a ground-based electronic warfare system. If the vehicles have been designed or modified to carry electronic warfare equipment, their transfer would be considered a violation of UNSCR 1747. Recall that paragraph 5 of UNSCR 1747 prohibits Iran from supplying, selling or transferring arms or related materiel.

-- We would like to clarify whether it is the intent of the government of Italy to release this cargo. We also would like to remind the government of Italy that UNSCR 1747, paragraph 5, in addition to prohibiting Iran from transferring arms and related materiel, also requires states to prohibit the procurement of such items from Iran by their nationals, or using their flag vessels or aircraft, and whether or not originating in the territory of Iran.

-- Further, the UN's 1737 Committee re-confirmed in December 2008 that UNSCR 1747 prohibits Iranian transfers of arms and related materiel pursuant to contracts whose effective date preceded UNSCR 1747's adoption in March 2007.

-- With this prohibition in mind, we encourage the government of Italy to continue detaining this cargo. We are willing to work with the government of Italy to determine appropriate disposition of the cargo.

END POINTS.

15. (U) REPORTING REQUIREMENT: Please report results of this effort within five business days of receipt of this cable.

16. (U) POINT OF CONTACT: (U) Washington point of contact for follow-up and additional information is Mark Felipe, ISN/CPI, 202-647-5376, felipem2@state.sgov.gov.

17. (U) Department thanks Post for its assistance. Please slug all responses for EUR, ISN, NEA, and T.

CLINTON